

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 196837 TOSEC 200179

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON ONLY FROM NEA

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EG, SU, SA

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE SAUDI DEMARCHE ON SUDANESE EXECUTIONS

REF: JIDDA 5391

1. WE ARE REPEATING TO YOU REFTEL FROM AMBASSADOR PORTER
IN WHICH HE SUGGESTS HIS APPROACHING SAUDIS TO URGE
RESTRAINT ON NIMEIRI IN CURRENT ACTIONS AGAINST FAILED
COUP PLOTTERS.

2. BILL SCHAUFLE AND WE PROPOSE TO SEND TO PORTER
FOLLOWING TELEGRAM, WHICH HAS BEEN CLEARED BY BILL BREWER,
WHO NOW HERE ON CONSULTATION.

3. BEGIN TEXT:
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARIES SCHAUFLE AND
ATHERTON

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ALTHOUGH NUMBER OF EXECUTION VICTIMS IN SUDAN ADMITTEDLY
LARGE, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THIS IS QUESTION OF REPRESSION.
VICTIMS HAVE APPARENTLY ALL ADMITTED TO ENGAGING IN
TREASONOUS ACTS AGAINST LEGALLY CONSTITUTED GOVERNMENT,
A CRIME FOR WHICH THEY WERE TRIED PUBLICLY AND FOUND GUILTY
UNDER ARTICLE 96 OF THE SUDANESE PENAL CODE. MOREOVER,

THERE IS STRONG REASON TO DOUBT WHETHER NIMEIRI'S FORCEFUL
RESPONSE TO PERPETRATORS OF LAST MONTH'S ATTEMPTED COUP
WILL INDEED WEAKEN HIM DOMESTICALLY. IT IS GENERALLY
CONCEDED BY SUDAN WATCHERS THAT NIMEIRI'S WILLINGNESS
TO USE FORCE WHEN HE DEEMS IT NECESSARY HAS BEEN ONE OF
THE EXPLANATIONS OF HIS SURVIVAL FOR SEVEN YEARS.

WE SEE NOTHING TO BE GAINED IN THIS CASE BY ENCOURAGING
OUTSIDERS TO ADVISE SUDANESE ON HOW TO DEAL WITH INTERNAL
DISSIDENCE. EGYPTIANS IN PARTICULAR ARE LIKELY TO GIVE
US DUSTY ANSWER IF WE GO TO THEM WITH THIS SINCE THEY
WERE CRITICAL OF US FOR WHAT THEY SAW AS OUR FAILURE
TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR NIMEIRI EARLY ENOUGH IN THE COUP.
IT COULD ALSO AROUSE MORE BASIC EGYPTIAN SUSPICION
ABOUT OUR ATTITUDE; FAHMY CLAIMS USG HAS ALWAYS BEEN
KNOWN TO FAVOR AL-MAHDI ELEMENTS IN SUDAN.

REFTEL BEING REPEATED KHARTOUM. END TEXT.

4. PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU APPROVE ABOVE REPLY TO
JIDDA OR OTHER SUGGESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE. HABIB

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